



BOROUGH OF OSWESTRY  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
L. WILSON EVANS, M.C., M.B., B.S., D.P.H.  
for the year  
1943

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BOROUGH OF OSWESTRY.

Mayor: : : : : : : Councillor T.W.Pitt.

Chairman of Health Committee ; : Councillor D. Stone.

The Health Committee consists of the whole Council.

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Health Department,  
6, Salop Road,  
OSWESTRY.

July 1944.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Oswestry.

I have the honour to present my sixteenth Annual Report.

The Minister of Health has requested that the report should be prepared on lines similar to those for the previous four years dealing chiefly with subjects of current interest.

Restrictions are to be taken as last year as regards the publication of population figures etc.

Arrangements are to be made for the preservation of all records which cannot be published in this report.

Your obedient servant,

L.WILSON EVANS.



PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office Held.	Whole or Part Time.
L. Wilson Evans.	M.B., B.S., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health.	Part.
H.T. Isaac.	M.S.I.A., C.M.I.	Sanitary Inspector.	Whole.
J.M. Roberts		Clerk.	Whole.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1943.

Birth Rate per 1000 population (Civilian)	18.9
Birth Rate per 1000 population Oswestry Rural District	16.6
England and Wales	16.5
Still Births rate per 1000 population (Civilian)	.66
Oswestry Rural District	.7
England and Wales	.51
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age per 1000 live births	45
Oswestry Rural District	46
England and Wales	49
Death Rate per 1000 population (Civilian)	15.0
Death Rate Oswestry Rural District	12.9
Death Rate England and Wales	12.1
Number of women dying in or in consequence of childbirth From Sepsis	Nil.
Other causes	2
Maternal Mortality rate per 1000 births	10.00
Maternal Mortality rate England and Wales	2.29
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	M. F. - 1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	1 -



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CAUSES OF DEATH.

	Male.	Female.
Heart Disease	20	26
Cancer	15	15
Pneumonia	8	3
Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions	5	5
Bronchitis	5	4
Violence	5	2
Nephritis	3	3
Other diseases of circulatory system	2	3
Influenza	1	2
Premature Birth	1	2
Congenital Malformation: Birth Injury etc.	1	1
Diabetes	1	1
Other digestive diseases	1	1
Appendicitis	1	-
Syphilitic Diseases	1	-
All other causes	2	8

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Disease.	Under 1 yr.	1- 2	2- 3	3- 4	4- 5	5- 10	10- 15	15- 20	20- 35	35- 45	45- 65	Over 65.	Total.
Scarlet Fever	-	-	3	3	2	16	6	1	1	1	2	-	35
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Pneumonia	3	1	1	4	3	4	-	1	5	5	12	4	43
Puerperal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	4
Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	4
Ophthalmia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Neonatorum	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Acute	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Whooping Cough	2	-	3	2	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Measles	11	20	27	32	25	162	15	4	2	-	-	-	298

Infectious Disease was distributed throughout the year as follows. Total.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.
Scarlet Fever	4	4	6	4	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	2	35
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	3
Pneumonia	7	5	9	2	2	1	-	1	1	2	3	10	43
Puerperal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	4
Pyrexia	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	4
Ophthalmia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Neonatorum	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Acute	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Whooping Cough	6	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	4	-	16
Measles	61	123	89	16	6	10	-	2	-	-	1	-	298

RECEIVED  
JAN 10 1904  
U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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	Cases admitted to hospital.	Deaths.	Case Rate England and Wales.
Scarlet Fever	32	-	3.01
Diphtheria	3	-	.88
Pneumonia	3	11	1.34
Exanthematous Pyrexia	1	-	11.68 per 1000 total births.
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	-
Erysipelas	-	-	.31
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-	2.54
Measles	-	1	9.88

### INCIDENCE OF DIPHTHERIA 1933-1943.

Ages in Years.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	Total. Plus.
Year 1933	-	1	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
" 1934	-	-	1	5	-	7	10	3	2	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	3	37
" 1935	-	-	3	2	1	4	5	3	1	-	4	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	4	32
" 1936	-	1	2	2	2	7	7	6	5	3	8	1	4	1	1	2	-	-	-	2	54
" 1937	-	1	-	1	1	4	3	4	2	1	3	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	28
" 1938	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
" 1939	-	1	1	-	3	4	-	3	1	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	23
" 1940	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
" 1941	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
" 1942	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
" 1943	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3

### INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

There was an increase in the number of cases of Infectious Disease notified chiefly of Measles and Pneumonia. The **outbreak** of Measles, the beginning of which was noted at the end of 1942, got well into its stride in February and gradually subsided in June. The peak months were January, February and March and over 300 cases were recorded, but there was only one death, a child of 9 months, a very low mortality rate for this disease and this despite the fact that over 100 cases were among children of under 4 years of age among whom this disease is at times very deadly.



The increase in Pneumonia was partly associated with the outbreak of Influenza at the end of the year when the only epidemic of this disease of the war years spread throughout the Country, but although very widespread it was fortunately of less severity than some previous waves of the disease.

Although 11 deaths from Pneumonia are recorded only 3 of the 43 cases notified died, and these were old people. A noteworthy effect of modern treatment of Pneumonia is the reduction of mortality especially among children and young people.

#### DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The favourable trend of Diphtheria was continued.

The proportion of children immunised continued to make progress.

While the percentage of 97.7 for the children between 5 and 15 years is about as high as can be hoped for, that of 58.8% for those under 5 leaves room for improvement as this of course is the group where immunisation is particularly urgent.

The following figures show the progress of immunisation since it was started in 1938.

	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
Children 5-15 years.	15%	19.6%	30%	53%	91%	98%
Children under 5 yrs.	3%	3%	8%	36%	54%	59%

The number of children who had complete treatment during the year was as follows.

<u>Under 5 years of age.</u>	
No. of children receiving immunising injections Jan.1st-Dec.31st,1943	128
Percentage of child population under 5 years considered immunised at Dec. 31st,1943	59%



January 1st 1882

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. in relation to the above matter.

I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the examination.

I have been very anxious to see that the work was done to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.

I have been very busy lately, and have not had time to attend to this matter as soon as I wished.

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5-15 years.

No. of children receiving immunising injections Jan. 1st - Dec. 31st, 1943. 151

Percentage of child population between ages of 5 and 15 years considered immunised at Dec. 31st, 1943. 98%

~~One~~ child who had been immunised contracted Diphtheria.

DIPHTHERIA ANTI-TOXIN ORDER.

A supply of Diphtheria Anti-toxin is available for cases residing in Oswestry in accordance with the provisions of the above Order.

This is available from the Health Offices, 6, Salop Road or after office hours from Mr. H. T. Isaac, Grenston, Croeswylan Lane, Oswestry.

None was used during the year.

VENEREAL DISEASE.

Facilities for treatment.

These are available at the Dispensary, Lower Brook Street, Oswestry and are administered by the Salop County Council.

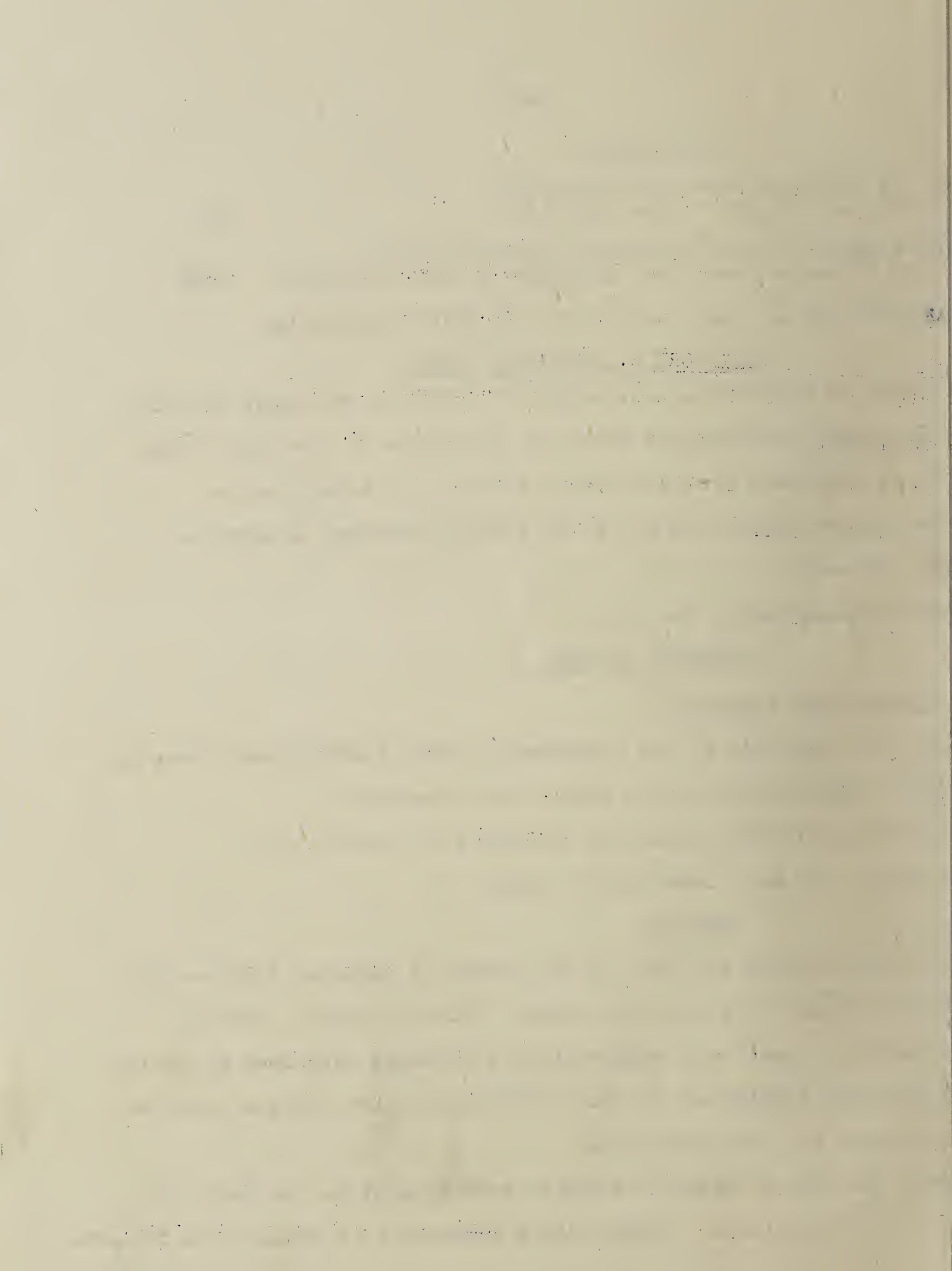
The Medical Officer attends on Thursdays the hours being

Men 1p.m. - 2p.m.; Women 2p.m. - 3p.m.

SCABIES.

There was a marked decrease in the number of cases of Scabies. The measures taken to prevent the spread, visiting homes, ensuring treatment of cases, and supervision of contacts have been effective. 4 cases were treated at the Gas Cleansing Station where a bath for the purpose has been installed.

During the year 13 cases of Scabies were brought to the notice of the Health Department. These cases occurred in 5 families as follows.



2 families  
1 family  
2 families

8 cases.  
3 cases.  
2 cases.

5

13

# TUBERCULOSIS.

Number of cases notified during the year.

	M.	F.	Totals.
Respiratory	8	3	11
Non-respiratory	4	6	10
	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>21</u>

	M.	F.	Totals.
Deaths.			
Respiratory	5	1	5
Non-respiratory	1	2	3
	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>

Of the notifications for 1943, five were notified by the Ministry of Health as service cases and made up as follows - respiratory 4 males; non-respiratory 1 male; and one non-respiratory female was a transfer into the town.

During the year 8 males and 3 females were admitted to Sanatorium.

The number of cases on the register at the end of 1943 was as follows.

Males.		Females.		
Respiratory.	Non-respiratory.	Respiratory.	Non-respiratory.	Total.
34	15	24	17	90

How far can the figures given in the report be taken as an indication of how the people of Oswestry are standing up to War time conditions?





It may be said that the strain and hardships imposed upon the people of Oswestry are mild compared with those which people in some other parts of the Country have to put up with. In some ways perhaps quite a considerable proportion of the population is better off than it was before the war, but many men and women are doing work to which they were unaccustomed and for excessively long hours and most people suffer from the anxieties inevitable in war. There are too, many people who give up time, which previously was available for leisure and recreation, to voluntary work of much variety. There are also shopping, travelling and housing difficulties, lack of holidays and blackout which Oswestry shares with the rest of the Country.

As a result some signs of deterioration in the standard of health might be evident. It is likely that there has been an increase in minor illnesses and quite a lot of people complain of loss of weight, which in the majority might be advantageous, but there is no indication of increase in serious illness.

If we consider the vital statistics and the figures for Tuberculosis, the latter, which has been said to be the surest index of health of the community, has shown an increase in the Country as a whole, we find a considerable margin in favour of the 4 years of war compared with the period of 4 years before the war.

Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Infant Mortality Rate.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis. New Cases.	Death rate per 1000 Pop.
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1936	14.9	14.4	40	15	1.01
1937	15.2	15.9	81	16	0.81
1938	13.8	13.4	51	14	0.82
1939	14.5	14.9	63	10	0.87

Average for four years.	14.6	14.6	59	14	0.88
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1940	16.8	14.2	52	12	0.61
1941	16.4	13.6	35	13	0.42
1942	17.0	12.7	48	8	0.53
1943	18.9	15.0	45	11	0.46

Average for four years	17.2	13.9	45	11	0.50
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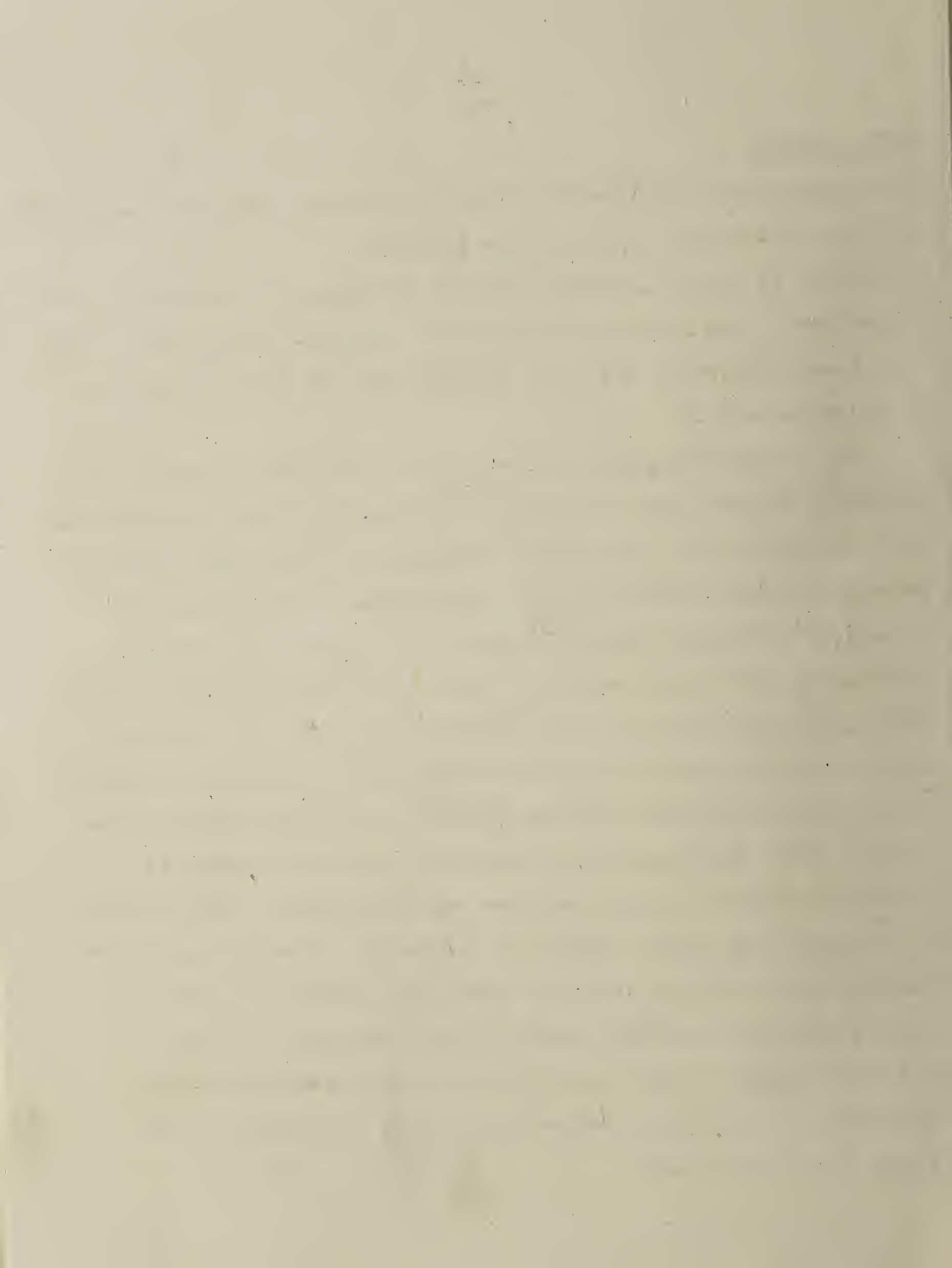
WATER SUPPLY.

There are no exact figures for houses supplied by means of standpipes but the approximate figures are as follows.

Proportion of dwelling houses supplied by means of standpipes	7%
proportion of the population supplied by means of standpipes	8%

I am indebted to the Water Engineer for the following notes on the water supply.

The Corporation gathering ground and impounding reservoir at Penygwely together with the storage reservoirs at Mount Road provide a sufficient supply for the normal requirements of the town during seasons of average rainfall. This supply can, at any time, be augmented by drawing 250,000 gallons per day from the Liverpool Corporation Lake Vyrnwy Aqueduct, this latter supply being obtained under powers granted by an Act of Parliament. The raw water is described by the analyst as showing "Organic and bacterial impurity indicative of pollution although not to an excessive degree for a surface water. Purification is required in order to render it suitable for public supply purposes but satisfactory results should be obtained from normal methods of treatment". The treatment given consists of an average period of seven days storage followed by rapid filtration and chlorination by the Chloramine system. The water supply to all parts of the town is constant and more than 99% of all dwelling houses have direct supplies or stand pipes within easy reach.





## Reports of analyses.

### Unfiltered water from reservoirs.

#### Chemical results in parts per 100,000

Appearance. Faint opalescence-flocculent deposit of mineral and organic debris-traces of vegetable debris.  
Turbidity: 10 parts per million, silica scale.

Colour. Hazel: Yellow-brown	50	Odour. Nil.	
Reaction pH. Neutral:	6.9	Free carbonic acid.	Trace.
Electric conductivity @ 20°C	70	Total solids, dried at 180°C.	5.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	0.7	Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate	.3
Hardness: Total	2.0	Temporary	0.0. Permanent 2.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.00	Nitrogen in Nitrites	absent.
Free Ammonia	0.0016	Ammonical Nitrogen	-
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0140	Albuminoid Nitrogen	-
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs. at 27°C	0.235		
Metals. Iron: 0.015.		Other metals	absent.

### Bacteriological Results.

	1 day at 37°C.	2 days at 37°C.	3 days at 20°C
Number of "Bacteria" growing on Agar per c.c. or Ml. in	5	9	240
Presumptive Coliform Reaction.	Present	50cc	Absent 10cc.
Bact. Coli	Present	50cc	Absent 100 cc.

This sample has faint opalescence and slight deposit but is not unduly turbid although the water has a noticeable colour. The water is practically neutral in reaction, soft in character, contains little saline or mineral matter in solution, and no metals apart from a negligible trace of iron. It shows organic and bacterial impurity although not to an excessive degree for the unfiltered water. It is a satisfactory sample of the reservoir water and no difficulty should be found in its efficient purification by normal methods of treatment.



Filtered water from the tap.

Chemical results in parts per 100,000

Appearance: Very faint opalescence - no visible deposit.  
Turbidity: Less than 5 parts per million, Silica Scale.

Colour Hazel: Yellow Brown:	40	Odour	Nil.
Reaction pH on the acid side of neutrality	5.8	Free carbonic acid.	Trace.
Electric conductivity at 20°C	70	Total solids, dried at 180°C	5.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	0.7	Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate	1.3
Hardness: Total	2.0	Temporary	0.0. Permanent 2.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.00	Nitrogen in Nitrites.	Trace.
Free ammonia	0.0008	Ammoniacal Nitrogen	-
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0110	Albuminoid Nitrogen	-
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27°C	0.220.		
Metals. Iron 0.010. Other metals absent.			

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS.

Bacteriological sample dechlorinated on collection.

	1 day at 37°C	2 days at 37°C	3 days at 20°C
Number of "Bacteria" growing on Agar per cc. or Ml. in	0	1	35
Presumptive Coliform Reaction		Absent	100 cc.
Bact. Coli		Absent	100 cc.
Cl. welchii reaction		Absent	100 cc.

This sample is reasonably clear and bright, but has noticeable colour due to the presence of a little vegetable organic matter in solution. The water is practically neutral in reaction, soft in character, contains little saline or mineral matter in solution and no metals apart from a negligible trace of iron. It is of very satisfactory bacterial purity and is considered wholesome in character and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE VETERINARY OFFICER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR.

I beg to submit my report on the inspection of the dairy cows whose milk is consumed in Oswestry. During the year 1809 cows were examined 240 of them being housed within the Borough and the others, 1569, without the Borough,





Milk samples were taken from every animal showing udder abnormality and these were examined microscopically. All samples were negative for tubercle bacilli. All cows suffering from streptococcal or other types of mastitis were isolated and only when treatment was applied and a cure obtained were they allowed to re-enter the dairy herd.

Four cows suspected on clinical grounds to be suffering from Tuberculosis were seized under the Tuberculosis Order, post-mortem examination revealing many lesions of the disease.

Despite the war conditions and the shortage of labour the animals appeared in good healthy condition and the cleanliness of the shippens especially those inside the Borough was of a fairly high standard.

A pleasing feature of the year has been the increase in the number of herds producing T.T. milk.

GEORGE WYSE, M.R.C.V.S.  
R. HUGHES AND SON.

In order to reduce the distribution of Tuberculous milk in the district the routine sampling of milk for the presence of Tubercle Bacilli was commenced in 1931.

The Cows supplying milk to the Borough are also examined at six monthly intervals by a Veterinary Inspector employed by the Council for this purpose.

The following figures show the results of these examinations.



Year.	No. of Samples taken.	No. Showing presence of Tubercle Bacilli.	No. of cows found to be Tubercular at Bi-annual Veterinary Inspection.
1931	23	3	3
1932	18	3	1
1933	13	0	1
1934	9	1	1
1935	12	1	1
1936	18	0	0
1937	5	0	3
1938	18	0	3
1939	17	1	2
1940	12	2	3
1941	-	0	0
1942	18	2	2
1943	19	0	4
Total	182	13	24

### Housing.

One of the most urgent problems after the war will be the provision of houses quickly enough to satisfy the needs of those anxiously waiting and hoping for a comfortable and adequate home.

It has been estimated that 4 million houses will be required to satisfy the needs of the Country as a whole. Before the war 250,000 houses were being built annually. At that rate it will take 16 years to provide the required number. If the building of the 4 million houses is spread over 10 years as has been suggested it will need 400,000 houses a year. Oswestry hopes for 200 houses in the first year. Two hundred is a very small proportion of proposed to be built in the first year 100,000/but will the materials and labour be available for even these and the many houses that need repair, against the insistent demands of bombed towns? To make the 200 houses a reality and not





just a pious resolution, it might be well for Oswestry to claim a proportion of the pre-fabricated houses which are to be ready in the first year after the war. Unfortunately many people fight shy of the idea, usually through too hasty judgement, but the merits and advantages of this type of house deserves very careful consideration founded on knowledge. If prefabrication will provide light, dry, decent well equipped houses quickly, then it should be welcomed as an aid to providing houses urgently needed by the soldier who has married since joining the service and asks for a home when he returns and has a right to expect that he will not have to pass years after coming home living in miserable conditions, nor his wife have to spend her time looking for decent accommodation. Although perhaps it would not do to say "anything would be better than that", it can be said that prejudice and preconceived ideas should not be allowed to stand between the people and the houses they have been lead to expect. The idea that the appearance of a prefabricated house must be uninteresting appears to be wrong. Great variety of design and material are now available. The Portal House, which has been on view to representatives of Local Authorities and others, would surely serve to accommodate a young married couple with or without a child, who would move to a larger house as the family increases, making way for another couple, either young or elderly.



SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

HOUSING.

The Council are now committed to a plan for building 200 houses in the first year's programme after the cessation of hostilities. Previously a hundred was considered sufficient. The question of providing additional houses can only be considered in the light of existing low standard houses that have long ago served their purpose and are overdue for clearance and the present demand especially by newly married couples and others accommodated in apartments, premises over and at the back of shops, also those which are overcrowded morally if not legally. The present makeshift arrangement where more than one family is accommodated must be viewed in the present conditions of overcrowding, for whatever standards are prescribed for the control **of overcrowding** and no matter how exacting the administration of them may be, it cannot be denied that the bedroom is the only place where overcrowding of any Public Health significance can occur and any Act which does not take this into account but permits of any number of persons based on the total capacity of the house being herded into one bedroom fails lamentably in its object.

Two hundred houses may be high sounding for a town like Oswestry but in the light of relieving overcrowding and displacement from houses which will inevitably be demolished when the opportune time arrives, the number will by no means be additional but only suffice to restore the balance.





HOUSE REPAIRS.

The question of shortage of men and materials seems to have been justified in some cases for not carrying out house repairs including drainage etc. In far too many cases however one sees bricklayers and others employed on work that cannot be termed essential. Can we believe that labour is so very short when one passes through the residential parts of the town and sees the large number of newly constructed brick walls to the frontages and such work while we know that during the last two or three years that kind of work has been given preference by house repair contractors to such work as urgent drainage jobs, defective roofs, repairs to coal fired washing coppers, defective interior walls and so on? The Ministry of Health has now issued a circular dated October 11th, giving a general scheme for the repair of houses. This circular deals with the Government's policy for dealing with the repair of houses and is designed to secure that available building labour and materials should be used so as to secure the maximum amount of improvement to the largest possible number of houses. The work which will come under the scope of the new scheme referred to as "**Certified Work**" will include work in respect of which a local authority issue a statutory notice for the execution of works of maintenance and repair to a house under either the Housing or Public Health Acts.

It is of an experimental character and will be reviewed in six months time. The scheme will require local arrangements to make it a success.



### VERMINOUS HOUSES.

Bug infestation is one of the most difficult and humiliating of all infestations which come under the control of the Health Department. Cases are reported from old cottage property where their existence has been known for years and where treatment from time to time has only been partially effective. There is only one real remedy for such class of property. In the case of comparatively new Council houses there is no excuse for bug infestations. Before tenants take possession careful inquiries are made especially if removing from certain known property in the Town, and the appropriate action is taken even if there is doubt as to the possibility of transmitting them to the Council House. Inspection is also made of the house itself before the prospective tenant takes possession in the case of re-occupation. Cases arise of infestation through the purchasing of second hand furniture, bedding and upholstery. Occupiers of better class houses have had this humiliating experience. Almost in every case reported other than from old cottage property the reason given has been the purchase of second hand furniture.

### FOODS.

Under the present war time conditions food inspection in its multiple and varied branches has for obvious reasons been in greater demand than in peace time. Damage in transit and certain effects through storage have been the chief causes of complaint. It is realised that storage of foods in these times on such a gigantic scale is a great problem for the Ministry of Food but there is ample evidence locally that stocks should be turned over in many cases far sooner





and more frequently than hitherto. The waste through rough handling on the railways and the pilfering is no small item in the loss of food in these critical times. Some manufacturers of chocolate and certain foods are forced to conceal the identity of the goods which were usually conspicuously marked on the containers. In other cases the damage done can only be described as the result of gross neglect in the handling. In such cases the Food Inspector's role when dealing with these conditions could be aptly described as food salvage officer.

#### MEAT.

The two private slaughterhouses situated in Willow Street still function for the slaughter and distribution of meat including frozen meat, for the Borough, The Oswestry Rural District and also part of Montgomeryshire, under the control of the Ministry of Food. The Borough and Rural District Sanitary Inspectors carry out the duties of meat inspection, the former inspector doing two thirds of the inspections.

#### RAT AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT AND DEFENCE REGULATIONS.

Although extensive advertising was carried out by the Borough Council in the drive against the rat population it could not be said it had a marked effect inasmuch that 90 per cent of the cases reported were of a very minor character and from private householders where the trouble could easily be remedied by the householders themselves. The major infestations had to be sought out and pressure brought to bear on the owners or occupiers to have them efficiently dealt with. A course of lectures and demonstrations were held in



Shrewsbury under the auspices of the Ministry of Food and were attended by the Sanitary Inspector and Mr. Meredith. The underlying principles of the lectures on modern rodent control was to kill off all the rats and mice within the area of infestation in as short a time as possible, preferably within 3 to 4 weeks. By this means the natural increase by breeding is practically eliminated. This "Blitz" control could be applied by poisoning, gassing or trapping. Experiments have been carried out on the lines suggested by the Ministry of Food given at the above course, by the Health Department voluntarily and as far as experiments go have been quite satisfactory. However it is not the intention to continue doing this work until the policy of the Council regarding this matter has been decided. The only alternative owing to the absence of the necessary statutory power is to report all infestations and the neglect of the occupiers or owners in carrying of their obligations to the County Council or the Ministry of Food and of course co-operating with these authorities in any measures they may take. Under war time conditions the destruction of rats is of vital importance in the national interest. Although the extent of the damage done to essential food supplies, property and materials is appreciated by all those who have had experience on a large scale, it is not sufficiently recognised by the majority of the community how great this is.

#### KEEPING OF PIGS AND POULTRY

As a result of the war there has been a steady increase in the number of pig and poultry keepers. Preliminary consultation with the Health Department as to the site, construction of styres etc. has done much







to obviate nuisances which would inevitably arise when pigs and poultry are kept under unsuitable conditions. The importance of the keeping of foodstuffs in properly covered bins or such utensils to discourage rats and mice and the frequent removal of manure etc. together with strict cleanliness goes a long way in minimising the usual complaints of vermin, smells and flies.

#### CINEMAS AND PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT

The two cinemas in the Town are visited at frequent intervals during times of entertainment and as previously reported they are maintained in a very satisfactory manner in spite of the frequent abnormal conditions. Other places of entertainment are visited and likewise there is no cause for complaint. The provision of adequate ventilation lavatory accommodation, strict attention to hygiene and the prevention of overcrowding adds considerably to the enjoyment of the patrons.

#### FOOD POISONING.

No cases were reported during the year.

#### MILK SUPPLY.

There were originally 30 retailers of milk in the Borough, of whom 14 have given up business mostly by transfer. Six of these were resident in the Borough and the remaining eight outside. On the other hand there has been an increase in the number of cowkeepers in the Borough, two additional ones having been registered and another it is hoped will be on completion of certain works. The milk supply is constantly receiving attention. Samples are examined at the Public Health Laboratory for fat content, cleanliness and specific gravity, or in other words the presence of added water



or skimming. Samples for biological examination are also taken as a matter of routine. All milk supplied to the schools under the County Council scheme also come within the scope of routine sampling. Complaints **were received** during the year of broken glass in the milk supplied in bottles. These were investigated and the matter put right. Attention was given to the proper cleansing of the churns and utensils. Samples taken of the rinsings showed that in some instances the proper methods laid down were not strictly adhered to and that there was room for considerable improvement. The matter was followed up with improved results. It is pleasing to note that on the whole the high standard and quality of the milk has been maintained. There has been no relaxation in the inspection of cowsheds and dairies.







